Appendix.

Vide **Answer to Question No. 120**

Statement *re* pupils belonging to depressed classes.

Pupils of the depressed classes	Boys' schools.	Girls' schools.
	No.	No.
Those who completed primary education in 1098	492	21
Those who joined English schools ...	106	Information not available.
Those who discontinued study ...	79	Do.

RESOLUTIONS ON MATTERS OF GENERAL PUBLIC INTEREST.

Proportional Representation of Communities in Making Appointments.

The following Resolution was considered to have been withdrawn under the Travancore Legislative Council Rules, Rule No. 40 (2), as the member when called upon was absent:

MR. TARIATU KUNJITOMMAN:

"This Council recommends to the Government that, when more applicants than one having the same qualifications come up with respect to the same post in any department of the State, except the Devaswom Department, preference be given to that applicant whose community is the least represented in the department in proportion to its numerical strength."

Permanent Settlement.

MR. M. R. MADHAVA VARIAR (*Chengannur* cum *Pattanamtitta*): Sir, I beg to move that—

"*This Council recommends to the Government that a permanent settlement of lands be effected at the next settlement.*"

I have undertaken to move this resolution in the Council to advance the cause of the agricultural population of this country. According to the Royal Proclamation of 1061, the date of resettlement, which is to be done after every thirty years, is fast approaching. If we carefully read the history of settlements in Travancore, we will be able to understand that the system which we have followed is most inequitable and oppressive. Though His Highness the Maha Raja laid it down as a principle that the Government are permanently interested in the well-being and contentment of the agricultural population, in preference to the enhancement of public income when it is not absolutely

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called for, the officers of the Government have used the settlement as an engine of oppression.

The first settlement in Travancore was in 914 M. E., when the kingdom of Travancore did not embrace all the area now forming part of it. The preliminary work was begun in 911, and the settlement lasted till 922 M. E. A settlement of all garden and wet lands was made and a list of holders, consolidated abstract and *ayacut* showing aggregate revenue and increase due to settlement, were prepared. The method of assessment for wet lands was to determine *pattam* for single crops and calculate the same amount for each crop, unlike the present rule which allows only an increase of 50 per cent. on account of the second crop. A document called *kuri* corresponding to the *pathivu* or *patta* of later settlements was also granted to the ryots. In case of failure of crops, a remission was allowed generally to the extent of ¼ of the *pattam* fixed. The second settlement was in 926 M. E., which was the first settlement after the modern kingdom of Travancore was founded. It lasted from 926 to 929. Under this settlement, the old tenures were recognised, a distinct procedure for assessment of the wet and dry lands was formulated, a special system of measurement for wet lands in South Travancore was introduced, the standard *pattam* for assessment was determined first and then the *iruppukaram* was fixed after making deductions on account of tenures, wet and dry lands were classified as per *tharam*, for dry lands planted with trees of the taxable kinds, a combination of ground tax and tree tax was adopted, and only bearing trees were taxed. In 948, there was a nominal revision of the previous settlement which is called *kēttezhuthu* (കേട്ടെഴുത്ത്). The fourth settlement was in 978. The asssessment of 978 was fixed not by actual measurement but by mere inspection aided by local information. The seed capacity of each field was taken for assessment, and the assessment was partly in money and partly in kind. Tree tax was levied from gardens. Certain tenures were excluded from taxation and certain tenures were favourably assessed. In 993, there was a garden settlement. There were 5,07,075 gardens at that time. The assessment was fixed with regard to the quality of trees and with regard to their productiveness. The revision of assessment in 993 was confined to such holdings as were in a condition to pay enhanced taxes and the original rates were retained in all other cases. Another garden settlement was begun in 1012. The chief feature of that settlement was the taking of fixed measurements and the adoption of different rates for different classes of cocoanut trees in North Travancore.

We all know that the last settlement lasted from 1061 to 1085. The older people amongst us still contemplate with horror the doings of settlement officers. The settlements of 978 and 1012 formed the basis of the recent settlement. In an address delivered by Mr. Rama Aiyangar to the leading landholders in 1058, he demonstrated the necessity of a revenue survey and settlement of Travancore and said:

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"We have at present no correct record of the extent of lands, no classification of soils, no systematic assessment, no register of titles, not even a complete rent roll or list of landholders. Such accounts as do exist are incomplete and necessarily unreliable, being records not of any regular survey made by trained or trustworthy agency but at best only of rough measurement made in a defective manner by men ignorant of any correct methods of measuring and under no proper control."

The objects aimed at by the last settlement scheme were (1) the preparation of field and village maps; (2) the revision of the territorial units and re-arrangement of taluks; (3) the systematisation of the varying proportions in which the Government demand used to be collected in kind and in money; (4) the equalisation of assessment according to the productive capacity of the lands and other considerations of a cognate character and the removal of the gross inequalities which disfigured the pre-settlement system; (5) the simplification of land tenures; (6) the collection and recording of accurate statistics relating to the amount of agricultural stock in the country and to the condition and resources of the State; (7) the investigation into rent-free holdings; and (8) the investigation into the *viruthi* system.

The results of the last settlement are sadly disappointing. The field and village maps prepared do not indicate the sub-divisions made in the course of settlement and thereafter. Nothing was done in the direction of re-arrangement of taluks. The classification of soils, the determination of the relative fertility and the actual yield of the different kinds directed in such unmistakable terms were not carried out at all. The point of view which the assessing officers were asked to keep before them was that in no case was the resulting revenue demand payable to the Government on any individual property to exceed or fall short of the previous tax by 10 per cent. The blocking of gardens has not been made after actual examination and determination of soils. Gardens similarly conditioned in all respects have been differently blocked and, in a few cases, even the trees standing in the same garden have been placed in more than one assessment class. Very little simplification has been achieved in the system of land tenures. To be brief, all the gross inequalities and anamolies which disfigured the old system have been silently handed down under the guise of an equitable system of settlement.

These defects which were handed down to us by the negligence of former administrators will have to be cured at the next settlement. The principles and procedure to be followed in the next settlement will have to be embodied in a legislative enactment. My suggestion is that a committee may be appointed to study the various systems of settlement in vogue and to formulate the principles and procedure to be followed. Before the next settlement, a careful resurvey may be necessary. The revision of the boundaries of *pakuthies* also demands the closest scrutiny of the Government. With the abolition of payment in kind it has become necessary to fix a uniform rate for all the taluks and for the entire portion of the paddy assessment. A serious attempt will have to be made to equalise the assessment after careful classification of soils by experiments. The Government themselves have recognised with sorrow that one of the main objects contemplated by

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Mr. Rama Aiyangar, *viz.*, the equalisation of the assessment with reference to the quality of the soil, has been almost wholly lost sight of by the policy, unfortunately adopted by the department, of a far too rigid adherence to the old assessment in the case of the wet lands. Devaswom and Brahmaswom *jenmom* lands contribute very little towards the expenses of a progressive administration in the benefits of which they share equally with the tax-paying ryots. In Cochin, Devaswom and Brahmaswom lands are treated on the same footing as other lands. These and other grounds urge the necessity for an equitable resettlement in the immediate future.

The object of my resolution is to urge upon the attention of this House the necessity of introducing permanent settlement for the happiness and contentment of the agricultural population of this country. We all know that agriculture is the mainstay of Travancoreans. Lord Curzon, once the Viceroy of India, in his pompous resolution on the land revenue policy of India, has clearly admitted that—

"The well-being of the agricultural community in India, constituting as it does so overwhelming a proportion of the entire population of the Indian continent, and contributing so large a quota to the Indian revenues, cannot fail to be, to the Government, a matter of the most intimate concern; nor can it be denied that upon the incidence of the land revenue collections must the prosperity of those classes in a great measure depend. The question may be recognised, therefore, as one of the highest national importance transcending the sphere of party or sectional controversy and demanding at once the most exhaustive scrutiny and the most liberal treatment."

His Highness the Maha Raja also issued the Settlement Proclamation in 1886, following the principles contained in the Despatch of 1885 of the Indian Secretary of State, to improve the happiness and prosperity of the people and to obviate the evils of petty exactions and oppressions consequent on a periodic revision of settlement. But the condition of the agricultural population of this country is daily growing worse. It is stated in the recent Census Report of Travancore that—

"The rice produced in the country is found sufficient to feed only 40 per cent. of the people; but if the area now under cultivation of paddy be properly cultivated, the rice output may be made sufficient to feed the whole population. In Travancore the number of persons engaged in the cultivation has decreased while the population and the extent of area under paddy cultivation have increased."

The admitted fall in agriculture is due to the fact that people are leaving agriculture to follow more remunerative occupations. The persons supported by agriculture in 1911 in Travancore were 55·5 per cent. of the whole population, while in British India they formed 72·4 per cent., in Cochin 50·4 per cent., in Madras 70 per cent., and in Malabar 60·7 per cent. The number of persons supported by agriculture has diminished by 2 per cent. in Travancore in 1921. Now, people have to depend for their food stuffs on foreign countries. They are actually suffering from famines. Owing to the fickleness of seasons, crops are damaged. Even then, there is no end to the imposition of taxes. Besides the inequitable land-tax, the people of the country are already overburdened with water-cess, forest revenue, and salt and export duties on staple products. Professor Mahaffy's description of the Indian

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ryot as 'a slave to earn tax for his rulers' is very true of the Travancore ryot. John Bright once remarked in the House of Commons about land revenue in Madras thus:

"You will find in many parts of India, especially in the presidency of Madras, that the population consists entirely of the class of cultivators and that the Government stand over them with a screw perpetually turned leaving the handful of rice per day to the ryot and pouring all the rest of the produce of the soil into the exchequer of the East India Company."

This description also entirely fits in with the condition of the people here.

If the Government are interested in the happiness and contentment of the agricultural population, if they care for the increased security of fixed property instead of the just rights of the State, if they intend to free the population from the interference of the fiscal officers of the Government, a permanent settlement of lands must be effected. It is admitted on all hands that the permanent settlement in Bengal has benefited all trades and professions by leaving more money in the country, promoted the well-being of tenure-holders, moderated the rent paid by actual cultivators and prevented the worst effects of famine. In 1862, Sir Charles Wood, the then Secretary of State for India, in a memorable letter, approved of the proposal of a permanent settlement of the land revenue for India. The reasons which he advanced in favour of such permanent settlement were (1) that it would stimulate and confirm the people's sentiments of attachment and loyalty to the Government; (2) that it would favour the growth of a middle class connected with the lands without dispossessing the peasant proprietors and occupiers; (3) that by limiting the public demands on their lands the thrifty and enterprising people would be inspired to exercise these qualities; (4) that it would be conducive to the contentment of the agricultural classes on which depends the security of the Government; and (5) that it would provide a ready and popular mode of investment for the increasing wealth of the country in lands.

We know that a permanent settlement will remove the uneasiness arising from uncertainty, the harassment of the agricultural classes, and the discontent engendered by mistaken assessments, the check to expenditure on agricultural improvements and the heavy cost and delay involved in the operations. Mr. R. C. Dutt says:—

"Certainty and definiteness in the rental make the Bengal ryot confident in his own rights and prompt him to save. Uncertainty and indefiniteness in the State demands at each revised settlement demoralise the Madras and Bombay ryot and take away from him the motive to save."

For the last settlement we took 24 years and spent 50 lakhs of rupees. If a proper and equitable settlement is to be made unlike the last one, we will have to take a larger number of years and spend a larger sum. In Madras the Retrenchment Committee was asked whether it could reduce the expenditure on resettlement and survey. The unanimous opinion of the committee was that no substantial reduction could be made in the expenditure for settlement. Dewan Bahadur S. Srinivasaraghava Aiyangar, in his famous memorandum on "The progress of

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the Madras Presidency for forty years" has advocated the principle of permanent settlement. He says:

"The theory of unearned increment in the value of lands and of the advantage of making it available for meeting public expenditure with a view to avoid the imposition of taxation properly so called can have but a limited application in this country. The true rent of the land, that is, the rent due to the inherent qualities of soil and advantages of situation as contra-distinguished from the value imparted to it by the application of capital or labour, is extremely difficult to discover and is subject to constant fluctuations. There is no certain measure of the fertility of the lands, as the rent of the same land varies according to the crops grown and the systems of cultivation practised. There is further great difficulty in deciding what is normal cultivation, normal harvests and normal prices. As Professor Marshall pointed out, good and bad seasons come so much in cycles that many years are required to afford a trustworthy average of harvests and prices and in those many years the industrial environment, *e. g.*, the local demands for the produce and the facilities for selling it in distant markets and for competitors from a distance to compete in local markets may have all changed. Secondly, the possibility of determining the economic rent presupposes the existence of alternative occupations and the possibility of movement of farming capital and labour to them to admit of the ascertainment of the normal farming profits and normal wages. These conditions are almost entirely absent in this country. Thirdly, the question as to whether the funds required for public purposes are taken out of rent or raised by taxation is of far less importance here than in England. In England, the bulk of the land is owned by a comparatively small number of persons who have benefited by the enormous rise in rent at the expense of the general community. In this country, on the contrary, property in land is diffused throughout the population almost to an inconvenient extent; so much so that landed properties consist mostly of five-acre farms and there are nearly as many properties as there are families. Fourthly, the limitation of the land tax will allow large scope for the development of taxation for local and provincial purposes on lines determined with reference to the wants and requirements of the several provinces or districts."

These remarks of the distinguished author will apply equally well to the conditions of this country. With regard to unearned increment, Professor Nicholson says that 'a land tax imposed by Government may take the form of a monopoly rent and as such enter into cost price.' To those who advocate the theory of unearned increment in the land-values of the State according to the fashion in England, I ask the question; "Do you want money or a contented population?" If the interests of the people and the Government are one, if the Government are only an agent of the people, how can Government claim a share in the increase of values and prices brought about by works of Government performed with the money of the people? The difference between the rise in value due to natural causes, the efforts of the cultivator and the action of the Government is very subtle.

Sir, I am advocating a permanent settlement for the prosperity of the people. When I speak of permanent settlement, do not think that I am advocating the imitation of the Bengal system. There is much difference between the permanent settlement of zemindari tenures and ryotwari tenures. The Madras Council has passed a resolution for the speedy introduction of permanent settlement. Even in the last Council, a question was asked whether it was approved of by the

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Government of India. The Government of India are even now considering the question of permanent settlement in Madras. Able and far-sighted British statesmen like Lord Canning, Lord Lawrence, Sir Charles Wood and Sir Stafford Northcote desired to permanently settle the land revenue in order to give some assurance and motive for improvement to the people at some cost to the State. Sir Thomas Munro, when giving evidence about the ryotwari system to the Parliamentary Committee, said :

"This assessment is permanent; every ryot who is likewise a cultivating proprietor of the land which he holds is permitted to hold that land at a fixed assessment as long as he pleases; he holds it for ever without any additional assessment."

He was questioned by the committee whether there was any difference between the ryotwari system and the Bengal permanent settlement. His answer was :—

"With respect to permanency, there is no difference between the two systems but the ryotwari leaves the Government an increasing revenue from the waste in proportion to its cultivation."

Lord Minto recorded his opinion in 1820 as follows:—

"To ameliorate generally the conditions of the natives, it is our firm conviction that no arrangement or measure will tend so speedily and effectively to the accomplishment of those important objects as the establishment of a permanent settlement."

The Lieutenant Governor of the North-West Provinces, who strongly advocated permanent settlement, was of opinion that the prospective loss which Government would incur by relinquishing its share of the profits arising from extended cultivation and improved productiveness would be partly, if not wholly, compensated by the indirect returns which would be derived from the increased wealth and prosperity of the country at large. In 1871, the idea of permanent settlement was definitely abandoned by the Secretary of State. The opinions of three generations of statesmen and builders of the empire were cast to the winds. Mr. R. C. Dutt says :

"Since then, the Indian Government have tried to persuade themselves and to persuade others that the permanent settlement is a useless and hurtful institution. English landed proprietors, who themselves enjoy and appreciate the benefits of a permanent settlement in England under Pitt's Act of 1798 learn to repeat when they arrive in India that what is good for themselves is not good for the people of India. Young men fresh from schools, when they come out as administrators to India, learn to sneer at the opinions of Cornwallis and Sir Thomas Munro; of Wellesley and of Lord Hastings; of Canning and Lawrence; of Lord Halifax and Sir Stafford Northcote, as the school of thought of an earlier period which is now out of date and out of fashion. And the people of India are asked to believe with all the eloquence of official persuasion that the grapes which are now placed beyond their reach are sour and they will thrive best under a continuous increase of the State demand from the soil."

I am advocating the introduction of permanent settlement so ably espoused by distinguished administrators who judged its merits from the highest standpoint, namely, that of the happiness and contentment of the people of the country.

Now-a-days, economists have begun to think that land revenue is not the main prop of the administration. Mr. K. V. Rangaswami Aiyangar, in his address to the third annual session of the Indian Economic Conference, has remarked :

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"Land tax has shown the least elasticity of any of the sources of Indian revenue. Relatively to other sources it has dminished in importance."

When a discussion took place at the East India Association on a paper read by Sir Patrick J. Fagan on "The future of the Indian land revenue," Mr. Wood suggested that Sir Patrick had dealt with the subject in too narrow a spirit, for he seemed to regard taxation as a blessing in itself and to take the view that a country's progress could only be measured in accordance with the extent of its taxation and added that a Government to carry on its affairs must impose taxes, but it did not follow that it must have land taxes. In 1040 the land revenue in Travancore was only 39 per cent. of its total revenue. In 1097 the land revenue is only 19 per cent. of the total revenue. The increase of land revenue in Travancore is 137 per cent. from 1040 to 1097, while the customs revenue has increased by 575 per cent. from 1040 to 1097.

MR. S. C. H. ROBINSON (*Land Revenue and Income Tax Commissioner*): May I know what the figures to which Mr. Madhava Variar is referring are?

PRESIDENT: He says that the land revenue in 1097 is 19 per cent. of the total revenue as against 39 per cent. in 1040.

MR. S. C. H. ROBINSON (*Land Revenue and Income Tax Commissioner*): Does he know what it is in Madras?

MR. M. R. MADHAVA VARIAR (*Chengannur* cum *Pattanamtitta*): I do not know particularly about Madras. I have not collected the figures for Madras. I know what it is for the whole of India. I shall give him the figures for India.

We have begun to tax the incomes and to impose local cesses. Forgetting all academic theories of foreign economists and new-fangled notions of land tax propounded by such bookish people, we ought to advocate the introduction of permanent settlement solely in view of the welfare and contentment of the vast agricultural population of this country. I have endeavoured to place before the House the necessity of an equitable and proper settlement, and the immediate requirement of a legislative enactment to fix the principle and procedure of the next settlement and to settle the lands permanently. I request this House to consider this Resolution with all seriousness visualising the exact condition of the dumb agricultural population of this country.

MR. N. RAMAKRISHNA PILLAI (*Vaikam* cum *Ettumannur*): Sir, I support the resolution before the House that the future settlement should be a permanent settlement of the land tax. I lay particular emphasis on the fact that the proposal is only to make the *future* settlement permanent. The last settlement was not undertaken with the object of making it permanent, and it would indeed be difficult to support a proposition to accept the last settlement as final. The settlement that has taken place is as imperfect as any settlement could be. The existing survey measurements themselves are defective, inaccurate, incomplete and partial, and the revenue accounts based thereon are

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imperfect. The last settlement has contributed more to the volume of litigation in this State than anything else. A settlement which deserves to be made permanent requires more laborious and extended investigation and should be carried out with the greatest care and thoroughness and on a different basis altogether. The problem presented for discussion is one of the most difficult as well as one of the most important problems connected with the administration of the country. It is so intimately connected with the material well-being of an agricultural population like that of this State, that in the words of the Government of India, "it transcends the sphere of party or sectional controversy and demands at once the most exhaustive scrutiny and the most liberal treatment."

Nor is the question a novel one. The problem has uninterruptedly engaged the most careful and anxious attention of the great British Indian administrators from the very commencement of British sovereignty in India. The object of those responsible for the introduction of the early land settlements in India was undoubtedly to effect a permanent settlement of revenue. The modern history of the land revenue policy in British India may be said to commence from the time when Col. Baird Smith submitted to the Government of Lord Canning his report urging the adoption of a policy of permanent settlement all over India. This led to the proposal made with the concurrence of the provincial governments by Lord Canning in 1860. The recommendation was accepted by the then Secretary of State in 1862, but was subsequently abandoned by another Secretary of State in 1883. Two distinct principles were adopted by two different schools of administrators, one urging a permanent settlement of land revenue and the other demanding a continuous increase of land tax for the State. Between the two schools, Lord Ripon tried to adopt a middle course by proposing to limit the demand for a continuous increase of land revenue to the definite and equitable ground of an increase in prices. This proposal too was vetoed by the Secretary of State in 1885. The evils of the land revenue policy continued to be the subject of agitation; and in 1900 memorials were sent up by several eminent and influential gentlemen praying for the smaller favour of a limitation at least of the demand from the land. The Government of India dealt with this and the question of permanent settlement in their resolution dated the 16th January, 1902, and finally refused to change the policy laid down in 1883 and 1885. In spite of all these declarations of the Government of India, the question has not reached any finality at all, and is still engaging the anxious consideration of some of the Indian legislatures at the present day.

Of the three kinds of settlement adopted in British India, the zemindari, the mahalwari and the ryotwari, we are only concerned with the last, which is the system adopted here and in Madras and Bombay. The distinctive feature of these settlements, as Baden-Powell remarks, is that in the ryotwari system the Government would never deal with a middleman, while in the other two systems it would

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never deal with any one else. The policy of the permanent settlement with the zemindars in Bengal, adopted as an administrative and political measure and in view of the difficulties attending a detailed investigation, has given rise to a good deal of controversy; and the mistake of this policy has been held up as an argument against permanent settlement in general. But the systems of settlement are so entirely different that it may not only serve any useful purpose but may even be misleading to compare the merits and the demerits of a permanent settlement as applied to ryotwari and zemindari lands. It is, however, necessary to bear in mind that the benefits of a settled land tax are likely to be reaped by the cultivator himself under the ryotwari system of settlement as it is directly with him that the settlement is made. This is peculiarly the case in Travancore as the cultivators are mostly small proprietors and the settlement is made with the proprietor himself who is in the vast majority of cases also the cultivator of the soil, and the person entitled to take the profits made by his own exertions.

The history of the ryotwari land settlements in India shows that it was mainly owing to the great difficulties attendent on a proper survey and settlement that permanent settlement was not effected as in the case of zemindari lands. It was the very labour involved in a thorough settlement that retarded the adoption of a permanent settlement in regard to this system as it was exactly the very easiness of the measure that led to the declaration of a permanent settlement in the case of zemindari lands. In order to effect a permanent settlement, lands had to be carefully surveyed, the assessment had to be made on sound and definite principles and a very careful investigation had to be made. It is generally the careless and imperfect way in which settlements are conducted that necessitates further settlements. That the object of the founders of this system was to make the settlement permanent is beyond dispute. Though fixity of the rental was not declared by any Act or Proclamation, it was accepted as a fact by the Madras Government many years after Sir Thomas Munro had declared that permanency was the principle underlying the ryotwari system. "There can be no question", said the Madras Government to the Government of India in 1862, "that one fundamental principle of the Ryotwari system is that the Government demand on the land is fixed for ever." When the proposal was made by Lord Canning in 1860, the only Government that objected to the proposal for a permanent settlement was the Government of the Punjab and their objection was raised on the ground of the incomplete development of the country. After the Secretary of State's decision in 1862, Lord Lawrence had decided to settle permanently fairly cultivated and fully developed lands; and in 1867 this decision was re-affirmed, and it was laid down as a rule that a certain percentage of cultivation in the district was necessary as a condition precedent to the introduction of a permanent settlement. The objection on the ground of a prospective loss of revenue assumed prominence only in

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later years. It is noteworthy that the early Indian administrators who worked among the people and who knew more about their conditions were in favour of a permanent settlement and were prepared to get over the difficulty attending the preparation for such a settlement.

Can it be said of such an enlightened and small State like Travancore that the country is undeveloped and not yet fit for the introduction of a permanent settlement? Certainly not. It would indeed have lightened much labour in the direction of a permanent settlement if the settlement had been preceded by an economic survey and investigation of the country and if scholars and public-spirited men had imitated the example of Harold Mann, Jack, and others who have been labouring with such conspicuous success in some of the British Indian districts.

But the main objection raised against permanent settlement is that it is wrong to deprive the State of the right to participate in the increased rental of land, as it is entitled to share in the unearned increment from its profits, and that the increasing expenditure of the State requires this resource to be kept up. Leaving aside the abstract question of the State's legal and customary right to impose and enhance taxes on land, the objection has to be viewed with reference to the economic and practical aspect of the question, accepting as our basis the proposition that the desire to widen the sources of agricultural wealth and to promote the agricultural prosperity of the people is the one important consideration of the State. So far as Travancore is concerned, that this has been the object kept in view is abundantly clear from the Royal Proclamation of 1061. A reference to sections 4 and 31 will make it clear that the advancement of the prosperity and happiness of His Highness' subjects was the paramount consideration that weighed with our Gracious Sovereign. Dewan Rama Aiyangar wrote in 1885:

> "And for a small native dependent State like Travancore, the wisest policy to pursue is to seek to improve its administration and to advance the interests of its subjects, not by leaps and bounds, but by steady and sure steps, by husbanding and improving the existing sources of revenue, by spending the revenues obtained from the country within it and for the benefit of the tax-payers, and by scrupulously abstaining from increasing the burdens of the people except when absolutely and unavoidably necessary. Any margin of profits left to the people by such moderation on the part of the State will go to increase their capacity for bearing increased indirect taxation and will, to use the words of Lord Sydenham, 'fructify in their pockets'."

The objectors maintain that the *unearned* increment of profits resulting from the general development of the country should be taxed. This certainly implies that the State is *not* justified in asking for a share of the increment resulting from the expenditure of labour and capital by the tenant. The increase of production in the majority of cases is *almost wholly* due to the expenditure of labour and capital by the tenant. It has to be remembered that there is no middleman between the actual cultivator and the Government in this scheme of settlement, and any profit left untaxed goes to benefit the agricultural population and not a limited class of landholders. It cannot be denied that uncertain and frequent enhancements of land revenue are fatal to successful agriculture. In putting a permanent limit on this demand from the soil, the State only induces the development of the land

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by enabling more capital to be spent upon it and thus indirectly benefits the land and enhances the taxable capacity of the people. Land tax is the oldest of taxes and in olden days perhaps the only tax available to the State. The progress of civilisation has devised new methods of taxation and expenditure, and at the present day land tax is showing itself to be so very inelastic that eminent economists seriously entertain the belief that this tax may be done away with altogether and other and more suitable forms of taxation substituted. In fact, in England land tax was permanently fixed towards the close of the 18th century and reduced to a rent charge liable to be redeemed. As a source of income, land tax is highly inelastic and unsatisfactory and its importance in relation to other sources of revenue has considerably declined in recent years. It required twenty-eight years and more than forty-two lakhs of rupees to complete one of the most unsatisfactory settlements in this country; and yet what has been the State's gain in proportion to this huge expenditure?

In this State more than 70 per cent. of the population are agriculturists and the numerous other taxes which have come into existence have necessarily to come out of the pockets of these very same people. Those who urge that the State has a right to share in the increment of the produce of the land conveniently forget that almost all the other taxes which the Government now collect have also to come out of the very same class of people who pay the land tax. There would, perhaps, have been some justification for an enhancement of the tax on land if the landholders as a class are more lightly taxed in comparison with other classes of people who were more severely taxed and land had benefited by the improvement from these sources of revenue. If there has been a general development of the country, it is the agricultural population alone that has contributed to this development and there is no justification at all for taxing the profits, if any, resulting from this development. The agricultural population are yet to bear further burdens of taxation with the extension of local self-government throughout the country. The peculiarity of this tax, in taxing the very object 'land' itself, whoever be the possessor of it, has also to be taken into account. The State fails to achieve one of the very highest of its duties, *viz.*, development of its own resources by imposing frequent burdens on the land. And after all, why should the principle of revision be applied to land alone? If the principle of participation in increased profits be applied to land, it has equally to be applied to the case of all other incomes without limitation. It is not fair to tax the unearned increment from land alone. Perhaps, it may be justifiable to enhance the tax on land which has benefited by irrigation and other works done by the State at the expense of the general revenues. But in such cases a special cess like the Kodayar irrigation cess will amply meet the ends of justice. In fact, such taxes are already in existence. Even the income tax falls indirectly on the agricultural population who are mostly indebted to money-lenders. The value of

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the land by itself is ordinarily very little; it is the labour and capital expended on it that makes it valuable and taxable. An indiscriminate tax on the earned as well as the unearned increment of profits which is the only result of attempting to tax the unearned increment is highly injurious to agriculture. For a State like Travancore, expenditure ought mostly to be for reproductive works and the increasing demands of the State ought to be met by increasing reduction of expenditure in other directions.

The principle of assessment adopted at the last settlement has been one of the causes of its incompleteness. Dewan Rama Aiyangar wrote in his memorandum on the settlement:

"It is acknowledged on all hands that the right thing to do is to assess the soil instead of the produce and have the holder to make what use he likes of the land. This is the principle on which all recent settlements have been made in British India and unrestricted freedom which such a settlement affords to the owner of land is found conducive to the growth of industry and the free accumulation and distribution of capital. The practice in a primitve state of society is for the landlord to exact and the tenant to pay a share of the crop raised as rent. Accordingly the earlier native settlements in many districts of the Madras Presidency were based, as in Travancore, on the principle of taxing the crop instead of the land. But this was found in practice so objectionable and so repressive of cultivation that the faulty system was abandoned in the Madras Presidency even before the introduction of a regular survey and settlement. I see strong reasons for preferring the same course here. It would entirely do away with the necessity for the periodical revisions of assessment which the present system of taxing the tree entails."

It seems to me, therefore, that it is not right that the cultivators should be subjected to the uncertainty and harassment of recurring settlements and that, in the interests of the State, it is desirable to fix the land tax permanently and for ever.

But an attempt though made at first was given up. I have hardly time to refer to the serious drawbacks of the methods followed in the last settlement, and I refer to this observation of Dewan Rama Aiyangar only to show how, in the opinion of that eminent statesman, permanency of the settlement was a desirable object to be achieved.

MR. S. C. H. ROBINSON (*Land Revenue and Income Tax Commissioner*): In opposing this resolution, my only reason is that it is premature at this stage. I believe there will be no two opinions on the momentous nature of the subject-matter of this resolution. The question of the settlement of land revenue is one of extreme importance both to the ryot and to the Government. The question as to whether assessment on lands should be subject to periodical revision and, if so, at what intervals, or whether it should be fixed permanently, is an age-long question and has been discussed over and over again in other places, but has not yet found out a final solution. It is a question which is very difficult of solution. It is well-known that, even under the system of periodical revision, land revenue is one of the least elastic sources of public revenue. The question is whether, by fixing land revenue permanently, it should be made altogether inelastic and, if so, whether the advantages to the State would preponderate over the disadvantages.

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[Mr. S. C. H. Robinson.]

I do not propose to discuss the merits of the question on this occasion for this reason, *viz.*, that, in my opinion, the time for its consideration, so far as this State is concerned, has not yet arisen.

The House is, I trust, aware of the fact that the existing settlement, which is the first scientific settlement attempted in Travancore, is very imperfect and that the principles on which it is based, and the incidence of taxation resulting from it, are in need of considerable improvement. Mr. Madhava Variar has referred to these. I need only refer to the combination of the land and the tree tax for purposes of assessment to show how lands of the same sort and fertility pay vastly differing rates of assessment. Even in regard to classification of soils, there are obvious defects.

These and other defects of the existing settlement will have to be thoroughly examined, and a careful enquiry into the economic conditions made before a definite policy for the next settlement can be laid down. But before we launch upon this enquiry, there are other preliminary things to be done, such as the rectification of inaccuracies in survey and the bringing up of arrears in registries. It is also well-known that the existing survey is far from accurate and up-to-date, and the House knows that just now a special staff is working to remedy these defects. The removal of these defects will take time; and it is not the idea of the Government that they should take up the question of re-settlement before the defects connected with the survey are in a fair way of rectification. It will be time enough when the settlement enquiry is started to consider the question of a permanent settlement together with other suggestions that may be brought forward by way of improving the method of land assessment. The world is moving fast, as the House knows, and the very principle of land assessment as such is being attacked in some countries; and there are some other countries where the State derives no income whatever from land tax. The question as to whether the assessment on land could be replaced by something better will also have to be very carefully considered. I would, for instance, draw the attention of the House to a suggestion which seems to me to carry much weight with it, *viz.*, that land tax, as such, should be abolished and that income from land should be included in the assets on the basis of which income tax is levied.

I would, however, sound a note of warning at this juncture. We should be careful in drawing analogies between Travancore and British India. My friends on the other side of the House keep saying repeatedly that we should not blindly follow British India, and this is a pre-eminent case where that should be remembered. Conditions here are very different from those prevailing in British India and the mere fact that some agitation is going on in British India for the introduction of permanent settlement should not induce us to adopt it in this country without being convinced of its advantages. We should be well-advised to wait and see if possible the result of this experiment in

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British India; and if the experiment proves a success there, a good case will have been made out for considering whether it should not be introduced in Travancore, assuming that other things are equal.

MR. J. JOHN NIDIRY (*Changanachery* cum *Minachil*): May I know from Mr. Robinson when the Government propose to take up the question of the next settlement ?

MR. S. C. H. ROBINSON (*Land Revenue and Income Tax Commissioner*): I shall come to that later on. As I have already said, even in British India the discussion relating to the system of land tax has been age-long and opinions in regard to the desirability of a permanent settlement are very divergent. We must also understand that land revenue has, from the dawn of the history of this country, been a staple source of revenue to the State and we should not lightly do anything which would tend to make it wholly inelastic, in view especially of the fact that our other main sources of revenue are by nature fluctuating and some of them like excise revenue are likely to decrease or even to disappear altogether.

It is not, I think, fair to ask the Government to commit themselves in advance in regard to the ultimate decision to be arrived at in this matter.

Mr. Madhava Variar says that he moves this resolution as he wants to secure a fair and equitable settlement. Government have no quarrel with the reason. It will be their aim to devise as fair and equitable a settlement as possible when the question comes to be tackled. It does not follow that a permanent settlement is the only fair and equitable assessment conceivable. I think the question is rather premature at this stage and so I oppose it. We can consider the matter later on when the question is actually taken up.

MR. M. R. MADHAVA VARIAR (*Chengannur* cum *Pattanamtitta*): When is it to be taken up ?

MR. S. C. H. ROBINSON (*Land Revenue and Income Tax Commissioner*): That has not been decided yet.

PRESIDENT: Mr. Robinson has already told you that, when the survey has progressed and has been made sufficiently accurate, the question of settlement will be tackled.

MR. M. R. MADHAVA VARIAR (*Chengannur* cum *Pattanamtitta*): May I know whether the Government will be prepared to embody the principle and procedure to be followed in the next settlement in a legislative enactment ?

MR. S. C. H. ROBINSON (*Land Revenue and Income Tax Commissioner*): I think it is not fair to ask of the Government regarding this matter at this stage.

MR. M. R. MADHAVA VARIAR (*Chengannur* cum *Pattanamtitta*): It is one of the principles raised by me in the resolution.

PRESIDENT: Is it in the resolution ?

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[President.]

MR. M. R. MADHAVA VARIAR (*Chengannur* cum *Pattanamtitta*): It is one of the points urged by me.

PRESIDENT: Mr. Robinson says that it is not fair to ask the Government to commit themselves to a definite answer at this stage on this point.

MR. S. C. H. ROBINSON (*Land Revenue and Income Tax Commissioner*): Let us first of all set right the defects in the existing system and wait and see the result of the experiment in British India. And then if it is suitable to this country, by all means adopt it. Let us not blindy follow British India.

MR. J. JOHN NIDIRY (*Changanachery* cum *Minachil*): May I take it for granted that the next settlement is not likely to be taken up within the next three years?

MR. S. C. H. ROBINSON (*Land Revenue and Income Tax Commissioner*): I do not think that we can finish the survey and set right the defects within the next three years.

MR. S. KRISHNA AIYAR (*Mavelikara* cum *Kartikapalli*): May I know from Mr. Robinson whether the present rules permit of re-assessment by reclassification before the next settlement?

MR. S. C. H. ROBINSON (*Land Revenue and Income Tax Commissioner*): What does the member refer to?

PRESIDENT: He wants to know whether, during the currency of the present settlement, a reclassification of land already assessed could be done pending fresh settlement.

MR. S. KRISHNA AIYAR (*Mavelikara* cum *Kartikapalli*): I wish to know whether the existing rules permit of re-assessment and reclassification of soils, before the next settlement.

MR. S. C. H. ROBINSON (*Land Revenue and Income Tax Commissioner*): They do not permit of it. The present settlement is current for thirty years.

MR. S. KRISHNA AIYAR (*Mavelikara* cum *Kartikapalli*): Is he aware of such reclassification and re-assessment?

MR. S. C. H. ROBINSON (*Land Revenue and Income Tax Commissioner*): I have no information.

MR. S. KRISHNA AIYAR (*Mavelikara* cum *Kartikapalli*): May I point out that in respect of *Cherikal* lands declared in the settlement to be Government lands and since declared by the High Court or by civil courts as *Jenmom* lands, re-assessment by reclassification is being attempted?

PRESIDENT: *Jenmom* lands are not ryotwari lands.

MR. S. KRISHNA AIYAR (*Mavelikara* cum *Kartikapalli*): May I know whether the existing rules permit of the same?

PRESIDENT: The existing rules relate to *pandarapattam* lands.

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MR. S. C. H. ROBINSON (*Land Revenue and Income Tax Commissioner*): The settlement rules do not govern *cherikal* lands.

MR. G. PARAMESVARAN PILLAI (*Neyyattinkara*): May I know from Mr. Robinson whether he can give an assurance on behalf of the Government that, when the consideration of the principles of the settlement is taken up in future, final decision will be arrived at only on consultation with this Council and the principle of re-assessment will be finally placed before the Council for its approval? My point is that it should not come as a Proclamation or as a Regulation direct from His Highness the Maha Raja.

MR. S. C. H. ROBINSON (*Land Revenue and Income Tax Commissioner*): We cannot say what will happen probably only several years hence.

PRESIDENT: Yes; several years or some years. It need not be decades.

MR. S. C. H. ROBINSON (*Land Revenue and Income Tax Commissioner*): I do not think that question could be answered off-hand.

MR. G. PARAMESVARAN PILLAI (*Neyyattinkara*): Sir, I do not wish to discuss the merits of permanent revenue settlement at this stage. I fully agree with Mr. Robinson in his view that the question is now premature. But I am really anxious about the future in regard to this matter. It has been vaguely stated about two years ago that resettlement will be commenced in respect of certain taluks where the settlement period of thirty years has expired. It was also suggested that, even without resurvey, it might be possible to take up the question of resettlement in the near future. From the speech of Mr. Robinson, I understand that a general resurvey may not become necessary, but that the rectification of survey is what remains to be done before the question of resettlement has to be taken up.

PRESIDENT: He does not say definitely whether a resurvey has to be done. He says that the defects will have to be rectified. That was what he said.

MR. G. PARAMESVARAN PILLAI (*Neyyattinkara*): That is exactly what I meant when I said that Mr. Robinson stated that a general resurvey might be unnecessary when the resettlement question was taken up. Preliminary to resettlement, a rectification of the existing defects in the survey has to be made, and he was unable to give us any assurance as to the length of time that may be required for the rectification of survey. At any rate, for my own part, unless a general resurvey is taken up, I do not think it will take long before the rectification is complete, and the question of resettlement cannot be said to be sufficiently far off so as not to engage the earnest attention of both the Government and this House. But questions as to what principles should guide the resettlement, as to what system should be introduced by the Government with regard to the resettlement to be taken up in the near future, and what principles should guide the Government in regard to

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[Mr. J. John Nidiry.]

this matter, ought to engage their serious attention. As has been pointed out by Mr. Robinson, the question is an age-long one and really very difficult of solution. It is therefore all the more necessary that the question should engage the serious attention of the Government. But so far as the interests of the people in regard to this matter are concerned, there is the risk of their not being consulted at all before the Government decide on the principles of resettlement. It is a matter which affects the agricultural population vitally; and although the land tax as such now comes in for only a small proportion—although it cannot be deemed as important when compared with the other items of revenue, still it is certainly a matter of great concern so far as the agriculturists are concerned. The question as to whether there should be an enhancement of land tax, and whether there should be a periodical revision of assessment, certainly concerns the agricultural population, especially in view of the policy of the Government that has already been enunciated *viz.*, that every further improvement towards local self-government, especially in regard to the needs of particular villages and taluks, so far as the agricultural population is concerned, should be met from local taxes. Hereafter Government will say that the villagers will have to raise their own funds which will be contributed to by grants from Government to attend to their primary needs. So that lands will certainly have to be taxed by local agencies by way of raising local revenue, and the land will also be subject to an assessment along with that. It is a matter for consideration whether it is fair and equitable that the Government should also realise from the land an equal or any decent proportion of such revenue for national purposes. As an item of national revenue, it ought not to be the aim of Government to depend upon land at all. I would, therefore, take this opportunity of bringing to the notice of the Government the urgent necessity of their tackling this question if they have not already begun to do it, sufficiently early, and their coming to some definite conclusion about this matter and then request them to place the entire question before this House for their serious consideration and to give us an assurance. I would also request the Government to give an assurance that no definite step will be taken in regard to this matter before the sense of this House is ascertained.

MR. J. JOHN NIDIRY (*Changanachery* cum *Minachil*): Mr. Robinson has assured the House that it is not likely that the next settlement will take place during the next three years. I do not therefore propose to dwell upon permanent settlement which is the subject matter before us. Still I feel bound to take advantage of this opportunity to give expression to some of the evil aspects of the last settlement and also some of the mischievous results that are still going on in its working. As has been rightly pointed out by Mr. Madhava Variar, there have been serious defects in the previous settlements, including the last one, though it was begun on scientific basis. The main object of the last settlement was uniformity and equalisation of taxes as far as possible. As my learned friend has brought home to us, this

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object was not attained and there were serious defects. The scientific attempt was begun by no less a person than the late Dewan Mr. Rama Aiyangar of proved ability and experience in the Revenue Department. But one aspect which I would place before this House is the result of the working of the scheme by his successors. His immediate successors were revenue officers of considerable experience of this State. They had ample opportunities of knowing the condition and situation of this country. Mr. Rama Aiyangar's immediate successors worked out that system with sympathy. So much so that so far as South Travancore is concerned, its working was more sympathetically done under the guidance of Dewans who were the natives of this State. When the settlement of northern taluks was taken up it was a most unfortunate accident that British Indian officers came to administer the country and it was during their time that the northern taluks were settled. The latter portion of the work was completed during the time of these officers who had not much experience of local conditions. The very object of equalisation of taxes was not achieved so far as North Travancore is concerned, because, if anybody were to compare closely the system of taxation adopted in regard to lands in North Travancore, especially in the unregistered and *Cherikal* portion, it would be seen that there is great divergence.

MR. PAUL V. DANIEL (*Agastisvaram*): May I know from Mr. Nidiry whether the North Travancore ryots pay higher tax than those in South Travancore or not?

MR. J. JOHN NIDIRY (*Changanachery* cum *Minachil*): I do not quite understand the question.

MR. P. K. NARAYANA PILLAI (*Ambalapuzha*): A little louder, please.

MR. PAUL V. DANIEL (*Agastisvaram*): Mr. Nidiry was saying that the settlement in North Travancore was not as satisfactory as in South Travancore.

MR. J. JOHN NIDIRY (*Changanachery* cum *Minachil*): I only said that the settlement in South Travancore was effected with more sympathy.

MR. PAUL V. DANIEL (*Agastisvaram*): I wish to know from Mr. Nidiry whether the assessment—

PRESIDENT: You mean the rates of assessment?

MR. PAUL V. DANIEL (*Agastisvaram*): Yes, Sir. I want to know whether the assesement is heavier in North Travancore than in South Travancore or not.

MR. J. JOHN NIDIRY (*Changanachery* cum *Minachil*): I shall illustrate my position. At the time of the last settlement a new basis was adopted so far as North Travancore was concerned. A circular was issued from the Huzur Cutcherry that there need be only eight *tharams* with regard to unregistered lands instead of fourteen as was the case

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originally. The *cherikal* lands and *puduvals* were classed under 14 heads. Subsequently, after the advent of Dewan Mr. Gopalachariar, I believe, these were reduced to eight classes or *tharams*; so much so that the lowest class of *cherikal* lands was classed as the eighth instead of the fourteenth. That means that the tax has been doubled or trebled so far as those lands are concerned.

My friend Mr. Krishna Aiyar put a question to Mr. Robinson as to the reclassification that is going on even now. I may also contribute my own personal testimony to the House by citing a case of my own. I had a *cherikal* land which I claimed as a *jenmom* land since I obtained it from a *jenmi*. The settlement officer, during the last settlement, wanted me to have it registered as *pandarapattam* land. I refused. Then it was treated as *pandaravagai*, and brought under the eleventh class. I filed a suit against the Sirkar for the declaration of my *jenmom* right which went up to the High Court, where it was finally decided in my favour. Subsequently, it had to be assessed on favourable terms, and in doing so, the revenue authorities converted the former eleventh class into fifth class; so much so, that my labours in courts of law came to a case of much ado about nothing; because when the land was brought under the fifth class I had no gain, since I had to pay a little more than what I had to pay when it was under the eleventh class of *pandaravagai* tenure. Such things are even now going on in North Travancore so far as *cherikal* lands and *puduvals* are concerned. So I wish to point out this aspect of the question of settlement to the officers concerned as well as to the good sense of this House. As the subject-matter under discussion has been pronounced to be a little premature now, I do not propose to go into the merits of the question of permanent settlement.

MR. T. K. VELU PILLAI (*Trivandrum cum Nedumangad*): Sir, I did not propose to speak just at this stage of the discussion. I wanted to wait a little. I find the tide has begun to flow strongly and fiercely towards the well-being of the agriculturist. There have been discussions about the quality of water, whether it is brine or fresh drinking water, or whether it is muddy or clear. But, before these discussions are over, I fear the inundation will pass out of control. I find Mr Madhava Variar is anxious to have a permanent settlement, or at least a pronouncement about it at the time of the next settlement. Mr. Robinson, on the other side, says that the question of permanent settlement is premature. From the questions asked and the answers given to the members of this House, it may be argued that the people have no serious objection to a settlement being effected. I take the view, Sir, that we should not have a settlement at all in the near future. [Mr. P. K. Narayana Pillai, "*Hear, hear*".] It is not a question of settlement coming to us in three, ten or thirty years. It is not again the question of permanent settlement which I should ask the House to consider. I want to submit to this House for their kind consideration that, once the principle of a revision of settlement is

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entertained, once it is accepted by this House—I may use the expression used by my friend the mover himself—that will be a veritable engine of oppression. We all have had our experience of settlement operations. It took 21 years for the partial settlement of ten taluks and the cost has been abnormal. The cost of surveying and settling the Madras districts was Rs. 459 per sq. mile. The cost of survey and settlement in Travancore was Rs. 1,160 per sq. mile. The settlement alone cost the Madras Government Rs. 123 per sq. mile, while it cost the Travancore Government Rs. 691 per sq. mile. We hear, Sir, complaints in this Council and in the Assembly about the inaccuracy of land records and about the whims and fancies of surveyors who do what they like with other peoples' lands. We have heard of mountains being converted into lakes and lakes being converted into mountains in the land records prepared by these surveyors and we have been complaining to the higher revenue officers to come forward and correct the misfeasance of the surveyors. The fact remains, in spite of all this, that the survey records are very inaccurate. So far as accuracy is concerned, we have to begin everything anew, and it has been recognised by many Dewans—and by the present Dewan himself—that these survey records are erroneous. I may refer to the address of the Dewan to the Sri Mulam Popular Assembly in 1096. Therefore, before the question of permanent settlement is to be considered, we have to dispose of the question whether any settlement is necessary at all, or whether any settlement will be for the welfare of the State. Much has been said about equitable distribution of the burden of taxation, and I find some wrangling between the gentlemen of North Travancore and those of South Travancore. I belong neither to South Travancore nor to North Travancore. I am one of those who are privileged to have been born and brought up in the metropolis of the State. Living, as I do, in Trivandrum and viewing South Travancore and North Travancore in a spirit of absolute detachment, but of absolute love for the whole country, I say that this kind of discussion will only raise complications which will embitter the feelings of the members of this House. Mr. Nidiry said that the settlement officer had much sympathy with the people of South Travancore and that when the settlement officer went to North Travancore—

MR. J. JOHN NIDIRY (*Changanachery* cum *Minachil*): I will just correct him. I said that the officer did so with the sympathy of the State.

MR. T. K. VELU PILLAI (*Trivandrum* cum *Nedumangad*): That is worse. If it is the sympathy of the officer I should not mind it. It is because he said that the unequal treatment was with the sympathy of the State the I demur to the observation. The fact is this. South Travancore was settled long before. Mr. Nidiry cannot have forgotten that royal authority was born in South Travancore and extended itself towards North Travancore. It is, therefore, that the lands in South Travancore were assessed earlier than those in North Travancore. You will also find that, so far as wet lands are concerned, South Travancore pays more tax than any other

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part of the Madras Presidency. The rate there is Rs. 16 to Rs. 18 per acre in Tovala and Agastisvaram, while in Vilavankod—which is also South Travancore—it is Rs. 5 per acre. In Trivandrum it is Rs. 3½. It is Rs. 2 in Quilon and Re. 1 chs. 17 in Kottayam. No doubt, as regards *cherikal* lands, there has been some difficulty in North Travancore because these *cherikal* lands were brought under cultivation rather late; so that when the Government assessed these lands, the new rules had to be followed, and this probably resulted in high assessment. My point is this. I shall be the last person to say that the people of Quilon, Trivandrum or Kotttayam should be asked to pay more by way of land revenue. I shall be the first to protest against any such proposal. But any fanciful idea of equitable distribution of land tax will land us in difficulties. The country will be split up into a number of camps fighting against one another. If the people of Kottayam and Quilon pay more tax on dry lands, the people of South Travancore pay more tax on wet lands. We must take the whole system together instead of creating unnecessary differences of opinion. The latter course will land us in a sphere of animosity.

As regards the question of a new settlement, I think it will, instead of advancing the cause of national prosperity, retard it. Since the settlement officer is a revenue officer, he will naturally be interested in showing the highest revenue possible and the officers will be vying with one another in this respect. Officer A will say that he has collected Rs. 50,000, officer B will come and say that he has collected Rs. 1,00,000; so that this rivalry will cause considerable hardship to the people.

MR. J. JOHN NIDIRY (*Changanachery* cum *Minachil*): I wish to know what he has to say about the reclassification which I spoke of.

MR. T. K. VELU PILLAI (*Trivandrum* cum *Nedumangad*): I am coming to that.

MR. J. JOHN NIDIRY (*Changanachery* cum *Minachil*): Fourteen classes of land have been reduced to eight classes. I wish to know his view on the matter.

MR. T. K. VELU PILLAI (*Trivandrum* cum *Nedumangad*): To classification also my remarks are equally applicable. A revised classification will create more burdens.

PRESIDENT: I would draw your attention to the time.

MR. T. K. VELU PILLAI (*Trivandrum* cum *Nedumangad*): You have been allowing more than the allotted time to so many members.

PRESIDENT: I have allowed a few minutes more to the mover and also to the gentleman who seconded.

MR. T. K. VELU PILLAI (*Trivandrum* cum *Nedumangad*): The matter being a serious one, I would request you to give me the indulgence of a little more time so that I may refer to certain other aspects of the question. This is a matter which has to be very carefully considered by both sides of the House; and since the matter is one affecting all

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the different taluks of the State, I would humbly request you to allow me a few minutes more even if I have exceeded the time.

PRESIDENT: I will give you five minutes more.

MR. T. K. VELU PILLAI (*Trivandrum* cum *Nedumangad*): I leave it to you, Sir.

It will be dangerous to invest officers with authority to make a further classification. Whatever may be the rules laid down by the legislature, even if we pass an enactment, the actual work will have to be done by the revenue officers according to their temperament, and the sufferings of the people will not in the least be relieved. I think that, instead of increasing the prosperity of the people, it will seriously retard it.

As regards the question of permanent settlement, some of the members seem to speak highly in praise of Lord Cornwallis who effected the change in Bengal. The pronouncements on the subject are not uniform. I shall cite authorities who strongly condemn Lord Cornwallis. Referring to his great reputation as the creator of private property in land, Kaye observes that he was the creator of private property in State revenue, and the destroyer of private property in land, destroying hundreds of thousands of proprietors for every one that he gratuitously created. Sir H. W. Elliot describes his measure as the "most precipitate and suicidal measure in the annals of legislation." Both the condemnation and commendation are equally exaggerated. The peculiar circumstances of Bengal might have required permanent settlement at that time. But in Travancore that is not required, because conditions here are different from those in Bengal. This is an agricultural State where money is allotted by Government for minor and major irrigation works.

MR. M. R. MADHAVA VARIAR (*Chengannur* cum *Pattanamtitta*): I wish to know whether no money is spent in Bengal for minor irrigation works.

MR. T. K. VELU PILLAI (*Trivandrum* cum *Nedumangad*): Yes; a lot of it in Bengal.

PRESIDENT: Mr. Madhava Variar, do you mean money spent by the Government?

MR. T. K. VELU PILLAI (*Trivandrum* cum *Nedumangad*): I was just going to say that. I am glad Mr. Madhava Variar realises the difficulty now. With reference to the irrigation facilities here, Government have spent lakhs of rupees on the Kodayar Project and they propose to spend a good amount in the development of irrigation throughout the State. Now, Sir, the Government seek the welfare of the agricultural classes. But if we have a permanent revenue settlement, Government will not spend enough on irrigation.

Secondly, there are possibilities of remission of land tax under the present rules. If a permanent settlement is effected, the Government are not going to allow any remission. The deterioration of land also will adversely affect the landholders. I may mention one instance. In the case of lands improved, *i. e.*, *puduval* lands, the surrounding lands become

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[Mr. C. P. Kochukunju Pillai.]

useless. In the case of paddy fields, under the Jenmi-Kutiyan Regulation, we find that when the land has deteriorated the tenant is entitled to a reduction of rent. Lands paying a revenue to Government may also deteriorate. Therefore, in view of these circumstances, I may observe that the question should be seriously considered by the House. So far as I am concerned, it is not the question of permanent settlement, but the question of no settlement that ought to weigh with us.

Then again, there are difficulties with regard to tree-tax. I do not mean the tree-tax under the Abkari Regulation. I mean the taxing of the cocoanut, jack and other trees. It will have to be abolished at no distant date. My suggestion, therefore, is that, in order to avoid these numerous difficulties on account of the tree-tax question, and on account of the further classification of the soil, all of which means a good deal of money and time and energy, it is better to have no settlement at all in the near future. The tendency in European countries is also towards the abolition of land tax. I know R. C. Dutt and others have been quoted. Munro has been misquoted. I also find that Mr. Srinivasaraghava Aiyangar has been quoted. All of them are really great names. But, Sir, to talk of the astronomical problem and to depend upon the opinion of Sir Isaac Newton and Galileo, I do not think, would be correct. In economic questions I do not like to depend upon the testimony of any particular individual. R. C. Dutt's opinion has been questioned in the Government of India resolution on the subject, passed in 1902. I am one of those who think that the present distribution of taxation is a burden to the poor agriculturists, whereas when settlement itself is done away with and when there is no revision of land tax there will be better prosperity in the country. A permanent settlement will bind our posterity to the payment of some tax which we may cease to pay after some time. The settled policy of the Government seems to be to tap the resources of agriculturists. Mr. Madhava Variar himself has quoted statistics to show that, while land tax has only doubled itself, customs revenue has gone up four or five times within a definite period. That clearly shows that it is time that we do not trench upon resources of agriculturists. A sufficient revenue could be obtained from other sources. That will be the best thing to do. Some of us might know that King Prithu said that he would fight with the earth and break her up in order to rescue humanity by liberating the food supply which she withheld within her own bosom. But that is no reason to put up a perennial bar against the humble agriculturists. I suggest that my friend Mr. Variar, in the interests of the welfare of the Travancore agriculturists, and in consideration of the difficulties that will be created on account of permanent settlement, may withdraw the motion.

MR. C. P. KOCHUKUNJU PILLAI (*Kottarakara* cum *Kunnattur*): The Royal Proclamation of 1061, which directed the last settlement, expressly laid down that there would be no new settlement for the next 30 years after the completion of the last settlement. The last settlement, as I am aware, was completed in the year 1085. So, for the next

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settlement, full 30 years have to elapse from 1085. So, we have about 15 years before the next settlement. An interpretation of that declaration was also made in the G. O. published by Mr. V. P. Madhava Rao who was issuing the same to expedite the settlement operations. It is stated there:

"No taluk has been settled in the proper sense of the term. Some taluks have no doubt been treated as settled. This only means that the collection of new tax as per settlement rates has been ordered. The settlement record or the *ayacut* without which the settlement may not be said to be completed, and which forms the only basis of a sound administration of land revenue has not yet been furnished to the Revenue Department for all the taluks treated as settled."

So, according to the Royal Proclamation and the G. O. referred to, our next settlement is to come about 15 years hence. So I request the House not to fight on this question of settlement at present. As such, I agree with Mr. Robinson in viewing that the question of permanent settlement is premature. I, therefore, oppose the resolution.

Mr. M. R. MADHAVA VARIAR (*Chengannur* cum *Pattanamtitta*): Sir, I have not to say much by way of reply, but I fail to agree with Mr. Robinson when he says that the question is not sufficiently mature for consideration. I thought that there would be a resettlement in the near future. Even according to the Proclamation of 1061, after 30 years, a resettlement will have to be made. So, if a resettlement is to be made, the principle and procedure to be followed in that resettlement will have to be considered early. In my speech moving the resolution, I suggested that a committee would have to be appointed or some persons would have to be deputed to study the various systems of settlement in vogue. If my suggestion is to be accepted, I think some time is necessary for accepting the principle to be followed in the settlement. There is no use in appointing a committee or in drafting a Bill after a resettlement. In Madras after the resettlement was begun, a resolution was passed in the Legislative Council accepting the principle of permanent settlement. There, the resolution was passed after the resettlement was begun. We must tackle this question and come to a definite resolution even before we launch upon a resettlement; and if the resettlement will not take place in the near future I can understand the objection raised by Mr. Robinson and others who say that it is premature. Even with regard to the time when the resettlement will take place, it is not at all definite. So, his objection that my resolution is premature is not very clear to me. I know that this question is a very difficult one and I do not say that Government should declare their policy with regard to it on the spur of the moment. But what I urge in the resolution is that Government may be pleased to assure this House that they will appoint a committee or depute some officers to discuss this question and to draft a Bill embodying the principle and procedure to be followed in the next settlement.

In regard to Mr. T. K. Velu Pillai's opinion, I would say a few words. I did not understand him quite fully when he said that no settlement was necessary. I do not know whether he is in favour of permanent settlement or not.

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[Mr. S. C. H. Robinson.]

MR. T. K. VELU PILLAI (*Trivandrum* cum *Nedumangad*): The resolution says that we should get the system of permanent settlement at the time of the next settlement. I am not in favour of any settlement at all in the near future; and if my friend wants my opinion regarding permanent settlement, I may say that I am not in favour of permanent settlement.

MR. M. R. MADHAVA VARIAR (*Chengannur* cum *Pattanamtitta*): I understand him to say that no settlement is necessary at all. He is not very clear to me on the point.

MR. T. K. VELU PILLAI (*Trivanrdum* cum *Nedumangad*): If I have time I shall make myself clearer.

MR. M. R. MADHAVA VARIAR (*Chengannur* cum *Pattanamtitta*): This was how I understood him, *viz.*, that, if permanent settlement was introduced in this country, the Government would not help the ryots with regard to irrigation facilities. I think that may be his opinion; but even if permanent settlement is introduced in this country, if the Government will launch upon any irrigational undertakings, the people will have to pay water cess or some other cess for that. So I leave the matter entirely—

MR. T. K. VELU PILLAI (*Trivandrum* cum *Nedumangad*): On this point—

PRESIDENT: Do you want to put a question?

MR. T. K. VELU PILLAI (*Trivandrum* cum *Nedumangad*): Yes. I wish to ask whether, when land is permanently settled, Government will be prepared to spend any portion of the general revenues for purposes of irrigation.

MR. M. R. MADHAVA VARIAR (*Chengannur* cum *Pattanamtitta*): Yes. I think the Government will be prepared. So I leave the matter entirely—

MR. T. K. VELU PILLAI (*Trivandrum* cum *Nedumangad*): I wish Mr. Madhava Variar to tell the House what the practice is with regard to Bengal.

MR. M. R. MADHAVA VARIAR (*Chengannur* cum *Pattanamtitta*): My friend was not aware of it and I am not going to tell him now.

I think that the question is not premature and I leave the matter entirely to the House and I am not very particular about it.

MR. S. C. H. ROBINSON (*Land Revenue and Income Tax Commissioner*): I have got nothing more to say. As for what Mr. Nidiry said, it is impossible to give any idea of the time required to start resettlement. Every day, fresh defects are being brought to light, and they are being brought to our notice, and we have to take steps accordingly. Therefore it is impossible to fix the time as to when it will be possible to set aright all these difficulties.

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As regards Mr. Madhava Varriar's apprehensions about the wishes and the ideas of the public being ignored, it is usual, when resettlements are considered, to publish a draft of the principles which Government are prepared to adopt; and Government will freely consult the public, and steps will certainly be taken to ascertain non-official opinion and the wishes of landholders at the next settlement when it does come. More than this, it is not possible to do without notice and careful consideration. We will certainly consult the wishes of the people before taking any action.

MR. P. K. NARAYANA PILLAI (*Ambalapuzha*): May I know from Mr. Robinson whether there is any State officer who has knowledge of the working of the permanent settlement system?

MR. S. C. H. ROBINSON (*Land Revenue and Income Tax Commissioner*): I do not know.

MR. P. K. NARAYANA PILLAI (*Ambalapuzha*): In case permanent settlement is decided on, is it likely that an officer will have to be got down from outside to initiate the officers here into that system?

MR. S. C. H. ROBINSON (*Land Revenue and Income Tax Commissioner*): As I said, whether there is to be any resettlement or whether land revenue is to be substituted by something else is the question that has got to be considered.

MR. T. K. VELU PILLAI (*Trivandrum* cum *Nedumangad*): Will Mr. Robinson be prepared to make a statement on behalf of the Government that the question of the next settlement will not be taken up for consideration until a pressing, absolutely unavoidable, financial difficulty has been made out.

MR. S. C. H. ROBINSON (*Land Revenue and Income Tax Commissioner*): I have already said what the Government will do. Public opinion will be invited and Government will publish their proposals.

PRESIDENT: Mr. Madhava Variar, do you press this resolution?

MR. M. R. MADHAVA VARIAR (*Chengannur* cum *Pattanamtitta*): In view of the explanation made by Mr. Robinson that the question is premature, and that resettlement will not take place in the near future, and in view of the fact that he said that the public would be consulted with regard to resettlement, I do not wish to press the motion.

The motion was, by leave of the House, withdrawn.

Introduction of Spinning in Schools.

MR. M. R. MADHAVA VRIAR (*Chengannur* cum *Pattanamtitta*): Sir, I beg to move that—

"This Council recommends to the Government that spinning be gradually introduced in all Vernacular Schools as a species of manual training."

The importance of manual training in schools has been recognised by the Government. It is mainly intended to train the hand and the eye. Though some money is spent by the Government to teach the

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